american socialist monthly

Symposium:
Why Labor Should Support Roosevelt — John L. Lewis
Why Labor Should Support the Socialist Party — Norman Thomas
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Resolution on War
"Fools Rush in . . ." — Herbert Zam
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Draft Program of the Spanish Socialist Party

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Symposium:

I.

Why Labor Should Support Roosevelt

John L. Lewis

WHEN George L. Berry, Sidney Hillman, and others organized *Labor's Non-Partisan League*, it was with the firm conviction that labor should give its full support to the re-election of President Roosevelt, and that this should be done without regard to political party affiliations. The American labor movement is not a political partisan institution, it rises above all party lines. Its purpose is to achieve for the workers those things that rightfully belong to them. This can best be accomplished through the force of united action by the entire membership of the labor movement. Employers, capitalists and big businessmen are organized to defeat President Roosevelt, if possible, and labor proposes to see to it that they do not succeed in this destructive effort. They have their American Liberty League, United States Chamber of Commerce and National Manufacturers Association through which to carry on their campaign. These organizations are working with all the venom and bitterness at their command. But *Labor's Non-Partisan League*, speaking in behalf of the many millions of men and women voters who earn their living with honest toil, stands in the way of the success of these three reactionary organizations, and shouts to them the warning, "You shall not defeat President Roosevelt!"

At this critical time labor must and will present a united front to the destructive forces of reaction. President Roosevelt has undertaken and accomplished more for the workers than any other president in the history of the nation, and labor owes him a debt of gratitude that can be liquidated only by casting its solid vote for him at the coming election, regardless of party labels.

The worker need only glance at the record to be convinced that he should support President Roosevelt. Consider what has been offered labor by the present administration under the leadership of this great humanitarian: national recovery, public works, nation-wide relief, social security legislation, old-age pensions, unemployment insurance, aid for the blind, elimination of injunctions in labor disputes, regulation of the coal industry, end of cutthroat business policies and practices, right of labor to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and many other things.

Through *Labor's Non-Partisan League* these eloquent facts will be brought forcefully to the attention of the voters of the country that they may have a clear understanding of the vital necessity for the re-election of President Roosevelt. His great reforms must be retained and maintained, and others equally important are yet to be secured. We are convinced that these purposes can be accomplished by retaining President Roosevelt in the White House for another term.

II.

Why Labor Should Support the Socialist Party

Norman Thomas

THIS article is written with special reference to the brief and positive statement by John L. Lewis telling why labor should support Roosevelt. The case I want to present is much bigger than the support, or failure to support, any individual. I am arguing *for* something and not *against* someone. Least of all am I trying to raise the issue of the personal merits of myself or any other candidate as against Mr. Roosevelt.

Another word of preliminary explanation may be in order. I deeply appreciate the fact that Mr. Lewis has contributed a statement to the American Socialist Monthly. It is a good omen for the future, an evidence of a new point of view on his part, that he is willing to argue the case. I, in common with socialists generally, am a hundred per cent behind the efforts of the Committee for Industrial Organization to organize the unorganized on industrial lines. We are very hopeful for the success of that movement. Some time we expect to work with the leaders of that movement and the rank and file on the political front even as now we want to work with them on the economic front. I am not taking a Socialist-Labor Party position as against a Farmer-Labor Party. I share the hope of my comrades for the development of a Farmer-Labor Party that may be a genuine instrument in the emancipation of the workers.

The Party has declared itself officially on what the conditions are for a successful and genuine Farmer-Labor Party. I suspect that Mr. Lewis himself would admit that those conditions were not met by anything done at that recent conference at the Hotel Morrison or by the program which it laid down. There is therefore nothing except for those who are convinced socialists to make their own campaign. Anything else would be a kind of suicide, a confession that our socialist diagnosis and our socialist program were wrong. Mr. Lewis, I am sure, will not argue that Mr. Roosevelt has been a socialist or that he has offered the equivalent of Socialism to the workers, and I suspect that he is logical enough to agree that convinced socialists can scarcely support with good conscience a man who is trying to prolong capitalism by reforming it somewhat.

Mr. Lewis' position is that of an ardent labor man who is not a socialist; who takes stock of the reforms of advantage to labor which Roosevelt has brought about; who hopes for others that he may bring about, and then declares for the vital importance of reelecting Roosevelt. It will be observed that he has not declared for the Democratic Party but only for Mr. Roosevelt. However, he and his associates will have to vote for Roosevelt *and Garner,* and then, I suppose, pray whatever gods there are that they may spare the President's life so that we shall not get Garner! Loose as political affiliation is

in the United States it is impossible to vote for Roosevelt without voting for the Democratic Party, and the Democratic Party is no vehicle for effective reform.

Even from a standpoint of mere immediate demands of a very moderate sort the position of Mr. Lewis and his friends is open to question at two points: first, as to the value of the things done or proposed by Mr. Roosevelt; second, as to the danger which threatens the country if Mr. Roosevelt should not be re-elected.

Under the first head let me briefly call attention to some indisputable facts. Profits under the New Deal Administration have increased far faster than wages or employment. There are still, according to labor's own figures, around twelve million unemployed. The percentage of recovery of employment is lower in America than in many other capitalist countries without the blessings of Mr. Roosevelt. Average wages for average workers in terms of purchasing power stood still last year. Employment increased 2½ per cent and, according to one set of figures, the profits of some 800 large corporations increased 47 per cent. Another set of figures using a different list of corporations gives the average increase as 36 per cent.

Before NRA was killed by the Supreme Court it left a great deal to be desired. Has Mr. Lewis forgotten that the Administration's settlements of disputes in the steel, the automobile and the rubber industries were in the main very favorable to the employers. Has he forgotten that the Administration did nothing to help the strikers in the Colt Arms plant in Hartford except to continue War Department orders to the firm whose workers struck after the Labor Board had declared that NRA had been violated?

Mr. Lewis, to his great credit, sent an investigator of his own into Arkansas. That investigator brought back a report of the desperate plight of sharecroppers and agricultural workers. In many ways they are worse, not better off, under this New Deal Administration. The beneficiaries of the agricultural program of the New Deal have been the landowners, the great planters. Thousands of the workers have simply been driven completely out of a job because of the reduction of acreage. Right now there is a desperate strike going on in Arkansas. That state is represented in the Senate by the Floor Leader of the Democratic Party, Mr. Roosevelt's personal friend for whose re-election he is about to make an appeal at a centenary celebration in Arkansas. But the record of the state in dealing with the strike is a record of brutality and injustice, some of it administered by mobs and some by courts. Whatever little benevolence the Administration may have intended in Arkansas and other cotton producing states has been frustrated by local committees of Democrats and not a single promise made by the Administration for bettering conditions has been carried out. Evidently the President's friendship for labor does not extend to those who are not yet powerful enough to give him payment with interest for anything that he may do.

This judgment is confirmed when one considers that the President has repeatedly made Florida the base of his winter vacation without commenting on flogging and murder as a weapon of the dominant class in a Democratic state.

Mr. Lewis is familiar with the situation in Indiana. In Sullivan County, a coal mining county, for more than two years Governor McNutt maintained a

bastard but very dangerous form of military law. Roosevelt never protested. As a matter of fact Governor McNutt is now the designated spokesman for Roosevelt at the great Convention of the National Education Association in Portland, Oregon, in July.

When we turn from civil liberties to the world peace situation, the case against Mr. Roosevelt is even more complete. He has no real program of peace; no real program to take profit out of war or preparation for war; no adequate program for neutrality. He is giving us the greatest Army and Navy in our peacetime history. Under him we are spending about a billion dollars a year on military and naval establishments, and there are men who have avowed quite frankly that one purpose of the larger army is to keep labor in its place.

One of the chief indictments against Mr. Roosevelt is that his view of politics makes him less than candid in dealing with issues. He has denounced the Supreme Court without giving us the slightest hint of the kind of procedure he would use to curb the Court or the kind of amendment he wants to insert in the Constitution. It is by no means clear that his appointees to the Supreme Court bench will be a great improvement on what we now have. One of the likeliest first appointments will be that of Senator Robinson of Arkansas, representative of the cotton planting and public utility interests of that state, and a man as fundamenally illiberal as anyone now on the bench.

By contrast, bad as I think the Republican Party is, I doubt its power to end Federal relief or Federal aid to relief or to reverse some of the useful New Deal legislation which has not yet been upset by the Supreme Court. The Republican Party which wins will not be equivalent to the Liberty League. It will not present a solid front. It will still be necessary and possible to organize across party lines in Congress for the support of more or less liberal legislation. Moreover, Mr. Lewis may find that it will be easier in the face of Republican reaction to organize a militant Farmer-Labor Party than to do it in the face of Roosevelt's smile. Yet such a party is absolutely necessary because the Democratic Party without Roosevelt is at least as bad as the Republican. At best it will only be four more years that the Democratic Party will have Roosevelt. In anticipation of the fact that this is his last term some of his party may be pretty recalcitrant so that his own good intentions, whatever they may be, may not be very well carried out. Speaking of good intentions, of course I am writing before the Democratic Convention. Possibly the Platform may reveal the President's hand. But so far all we know is that he wants us to vote that he has done a good job and to trust him for the rest. That is not sound or satisfactory procedure in a democracy.

But, the alternative, Mr. Lewis may say, as Sidney Hillman did tell the Amalgamated Convention, is the Liberty League, and the Liberty League equals American fascism. That is not the case. The Liberty League represents reaction, the type of reaction that may help prepare the way for fascism, or which if it is successful enough will make fascism unnecessary. One of the worst things that Hillman, if not Lewis, is doing is to confuse the minds of the workers on the subject of fascism. The danger of fascism does not arise chiefly from sheer stark reaction such as the Liberty League magnates want. It arises from the demagogue who appeals to a

dissatisfied middle-class and wears the garments of liberalism or radicalism. The Republican Party is not in any realistic sense as yet fascist. It still hopes to go back more or less to the times of Coolidge. The struggle against fascism is not a struggle against one or another type of capitalism primarily. It is a struggle for a cooperative commonwealth. It is a struggle which requires a fundamental education of workers and their organization in their own behalf. This is denied or delayed by the "trust Roosevelt" doctrine. When that "trust Roosevelt" doctrine is preached as intolerantly as Sidney Hillman preached it to the Amalgamated Convention; when such bitter abuse is showered on Joseph Schlossberg for not silently going along with the majority, the men responsible for such tactics in a labor union are helping to stir up the very mob mindedness to which the real fascist demagogue appeals.

Fascism in America will not call itself fascism. It will doubtless denounce European fascism along with communism and socialism. It will not talk the language of the Liberty League. It will not get the support of great business until a new economic catastrophe toward which we drift in spite of anything that Roosevelt has done or will do is upon us. Then some of the magnates will support fascism as a second choice or as an alternative to a cooperative commonwealth.

Against this danger of an American fascism arising out of economic catastrophe or out of new war—for a new war would mean fascism at home—the election of Roosevelt will be little protection. Indeed, it may even weaken our defenses by lulling the workers to a false security. The vital protection is the organization and education of the workers themselves, and that cannot be done by whooping it up for a good man in a bad party, a good man, moreover, who at best is doing nothing except to try to reform capitalism a little. The workers must achieve their own salvation. That requires them not to rally around a benefactor or support a Messiah but to organize in their own behalf economically and politically. Mr. Lewis knows that well enough in the economic field. He would never for an instant say that it was enough on the coal fields to support the good employer. Unless labor learns that there is a reasonably close analogy on the political field, labor will always be selling itself for a cheap price. And it will not always get even that low price.

We are justified by an appeal to history. In 1916 there seemed to be a very strong case for voting for Wilson because he kept us out of war. We got into war, into the same war into which Hughes would have led us. Repeatedly during the period before Hitler finally took power the German workers felt that it was necessary to take less than they desired and to vote for a Hindenburg to keep out Hitler. They elected Hindenburg but they did not keep out Hitler. First they got Hindenburg, then Hindenburg helped give them Hitler, then Hindenburg died and they had Hitler alone. By the same token, the election of Roosevelt will neither prevent reaction nor fascism. The one hope of that lies in a clear-cut socialist program. It is not the Old Deal, not the New Deal which has failed. It is the capitalism of which both are the expression. There are immediate reforms worth while to labor, some of which have been imperfectly advocated by Mr. Roosevelt. But Germany which had all reforms possible within capitalism, Ger-

many where the workers had won more rights, in so far as they can have rights under capitalism, than they have yet demanded in America, found that these reforms were not an adequate barrier to fascism. It is considerations like these which lead me to believe that this year more than ever before it is imperative to have a vigorous socialist campaign, to get the maximum of labor interest, labor understanding, labor support, labor votes for the Socialist Party. Only so is there reasonable hope that after the 1936 election there will emerge a Farmer-Labor Party of the right sort. These are the reasons why those of us who are enthusiastic supporters of the Committee for Industrial Organization cannot be supporters of Mr. Lewis' other committee, the Non-Partisan Committee for Roosevelt. Instead we have to declare our positive faith in Socialism, the hope of the world. To declare this faith is perfectly consistent with the advocacy of measures to strengthen labor on the march and to make war less likely. In this spirit we enter our great campaign.

A WORD ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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The Left Wing at the Cleveland Convention

Haim Kantorovitch

I.

THERE seems to be unanimous opinion, shared by right and left wingers alike, that the National Convention of the Socialist Party recently held at Cleveland was a great victory for the left wing. Even before the convention had adjourned, Abraham Cahan, the real leader of the old guard, had published what he called "preliminary observations" on the convention. There are people, he commented, who think that the convention, in spite of the fact that the New York old guard delegates had not been seated, nevertheless had moved to the right. This is not true he exclaims. All "their" resolutions, "their" platform, even the Declaration of Principles as amended, are full of "left phrases". To clarify what he means by left he adds, left, coming from Moscow! And he concludes that the convention went left, left, left.

It is not surprising to hear Cahan shout left! left! left! To Cahan and his faithful disciples of the Rand School, left connotes everyone and everything that Cahan disapproves. When a good orthodox right winger expressed the doubt whether the *Forward* should accept the Hearst advertisements, Cahan looked at him scornfully and said, I noticed long ago that you have been falling under the influence of Moscow! The same note was struck at the first membership meeting, held in New York, of the newly organized Social Democratic Federation: We are compelled to organize the Social Democratic Federation as an opposition to the Socialist Party because the latter went left, left, left.

There are however indications that many left wingers, or comrades who mistakenly believe they are left wingers, also believe this legend. There is no question, of course, that the courageous and decisive way in which the convention dealt with the New York old guard clique is a victory for the left wing. We must, however, in this case distinguish between the left wing, and left wing Socialism. The victory over the New York old guard is a victory for the left wing, but not a victory of left wing Socialism. The fight between the old guard and the militants in New York centered not around certain opposing principles and programs, but purely around questions of party democracy and party discipline. Not that there were no deep rooted and fundamental differences of theory and tactics between the two warring factions. Of course there were. But the fight was not conducted around these differences of fundamental principles. Neither was the outcome of the fight determined by them. On the contrary, the exigencies of the fight often compelled the militants to compromise and shove principles into the background in order to get the support of socialists who would not accept left wing Socialism, but who could not endure the cynicism, arrogance and senility of the old guard. Many convinced right wingers participated actively in the fight against the

New York old guard. The old guard was to them, as indeed to everyone else, not a group of right wing socialists fighting for their principles, but a clique of old people, who cared little for Socialism of any kind, a group that had lost faith in Socialism as well as in the future of the Socialist Party. Many right wingers and centrists felt that the party was doomed to impotence so long as this clique ruled the party. Moreover, everyone knew that this clique had no majority behind it, that its rule was maintained by purely mechanical, anti-democratic means.

In his speech at the Cleveland Convention, Louis Waldman spent considerable time defending himself against the accusations that he and his followers in New York had capitulated to La Guardia, and were ready to do the same thing, nationally, for Roosevelt. Waldman did not really deny these charges. He defended himself by pointing out that others had done the same thing but that no charges had been brought against them. He pointed specifically to Wisconsin. There is no question that in citing Wisconsin he had placed his finger on a very sore spot in the life of the party. Yet the entire argument was out of order. The N.E.C. had not revoked the charter of the State of New York because the leadership of the State Committee was reformist, was friendly to La Guardia, or was looking longingly towards the Roosevelt camp. The charter was revoked solely because the old guard had placed itself above the party, had refused to abide by the party constitution, had broken every rule of party discipline and democracy, of socialist ethics and even common decency; because it conducted an open and vicious campaign, not against the principles of revolutionary Socialism, but against the party as a whole.

I do not minimize the victory over the old guard, but I want to warn comrades against exaggerating it. It must be clearly understood that this was a victory not of one concept of Socialism over another, but solely of the principle of party democracy and democratic centralization.

II.

Was the time appropriate for the presentation at Cleveland of the entire left wing program, or even part of it? Perhaps not. I do not know.* But one thing is beyond doubt. The victory over the New York old guard could have been utilized to further the principle of democratic centralization generally, a principle of no minor importance for the left wing. A strong effort should have been made, using the New York old guard as an example, to amend the party constitution so as to lay the foundation for one united Socialist Party in the United States instead of the forty-eight independent autonomous parties we now have. As the party is now organized, resolutions, programs or declarations of principles are really of no great importance. If a state, or rather the leadership in a state, does not agree with this or that resolution it simply ignores it; if it does not agree with this or that decision, it simply does not carry it out. What does the Socialist Party stand for? It depends where. It seems to stand for one kind of Socialism in Wisconsin, for another kind in Chicago, and again for another kind in Bridgeport. I am certain that everybody is for freedom of opinion in the party, but freedom of opinion in a Socialist Party must be

* I must note that illness prevented attendance at the Convention. Yet, I am not basing my judgment on casual newspaper reports, but on a very careful study of the stenographic report of the Convention.

limited by unity of action. Has the Cleveland Convention done anything to achieve this unity of action? No. It did nothing in this direction. Organizationally the party remains as decentralized as it was before Cleveland, and iedologically it seems to have moved to the right.

And what was the left wing doing? What was it fighting for?

It seems that after the victory over the old guard the left wing disappeared as an organized force in the convention. There were left voices and left amendments to be sure, but no organized left wing. A few illustrations will suffice. In nominating a platform committee, surely a very important committee, a committee just where opinions would clash, where each faction would fight for its conception of political action, a left winger nominated whom? A right winger. From the point of view of the proverbial concept of sportsmanship it is "nice" to be tolerant and nominate your opponent—in this case, the comrade nominated, a right winger, is really a very fine comrade and a lovable personality—but, that nomination for such an important committee is a political act never occurred to our left winger.

Another instance. The resolution on trade union policy was discussed. The resolution provided that there shall be a national labor committee and that "each local organization *shall* elect a local labor committee whose duty it will be to coordinate the action of the socialists within the trade unions in order to carry out the policy of the party." We have learned by bitter experience that without such labor committees no coordinated socialist work is possible in the trade unions. But lo and behold! It was a left winger who moved an amendment to change the word *shall* to the word *may*. Each local *may* elect a local labor committee. And what is the effect of this amendment? To leave everything as it was. No local before the Cleveland Convention was forbidden to have a labor committee if it so desired. Now, no local is obligated to have a labor committee if it does not want to. We are just where we were before. The very comrade who amended that section of the resolution made a good speech against his own amendment, though he seems not to have realized that he was speaking against his amendment. "If people are to be members of the Socialist Party," he exclaimed, "they must act as socialists within the trade unions." He knew, however, that many did not act thus. Why? Because the socialist work in the trade unions was not coordinated by responsible party committees. It was left to the interpretation and personal whims of each individual socialist. The resolution would have remedied this anomalous condition. His amendment, however, reduced the resolution again to nothing but a pious wish.

I do not for a moment believe that the left wing was for the amendment, but the fact remains that it did not fight against it.

Only one amendment to the constitution was proposed. This is the addition of a sixth section to article three.

> "The state organization shall have full and final authority over the admission and expulsion of members, being responsible however to the N.E.C. and the National Convention for any abuse of state power."

For some reason which I cannot gather, many comrades from the right, as well as from the left, thought this addition was a step in the direction of centralization. In reality it is another concession to decentralization and states rights. The chairman of the session at which this amendment was discussed

interpreted it as follows:

> "But there would be no direct appeal by the member who is excluded. There would only be a question of the abuse of authority which was raised and brought before the N.E.C." (Stenographic report, p. 397.)

In other words, if the N.E.C. should happen to issue an appeal to groups to join the party as it once did, or if any state committee should decide to expell an individual or many individuals, as the New York old guard tried, neither the rejected nor the expelled could appeal to the N.E.C. The N.E.C. would only have to decide whether the state committee had abused its power. While the amendment is very clear as to the rights of the state organizations, it is very vague as to what would constitute abuse of power.

III.

The fight betwen the militants and old guard in the party was centered, since the Detroit Convention, around the Declaration of Principles. The left wing never considered the Detroit Declaration of Principles as really a left wing document. In my pamphlet, "Socialism at the Crossroads", published and distributed by the militants, the Declaration of Principles is declared to be only a first step in the development of the party towards the left. The old guard saw "Communism, Bolshevism, Anarchism and even a call to dual unionism" in the Declaration. To appease the right wing the convention felt that some of the vague and unclear sentences should be clarified. With this view in mind the resolutions committee set to work to revise it. It added a few sentences clarifying the question of democracy. We will not discuss this addition because it is not really important. The committee was not content however with "clarifying". It also added a new section on armed insurrection.

The question of armed insurrection is part of a larger question, the road to power. This was not discussed or even mentioned at the convention. The resolution reads:

> "The ability of the Socialist Party to continue to rule and build Socialism *once it has won political power,* will depend upon the active support of the masses of the nation. The Socialist Party, therefore, firmly believes in the strengthening and maintenance of existing democratic institutions through which the socialist will of the masses may be cultivated and expressed. The advocacy of a policy of armed insurrection by a *minority* against a *stable* state machinery is romantic impossibilism, entirely inconsistent with membership in the Socialist Party, etc." (Italics H.K.) Note first of all the fundamental thesis of the resolution.

It rejects the advocacy of armed insurrection because "once it has won political power" it will depend in its work of building Socialism upon the active support of the masses, etc. In other words, the resolution refers to armed insurrection *after the Socialist Party has won political power.* Has any member of the committee ever heard of any socialist, no matter how revolutionary, who advocated armed insurrection after the socialists had won political power? Those who do advocate armed insurrection do so because they believe that without it socialists will never win political power. To be sure, there may be danger of armed insurrection after the socialists have won political power. The defeated capitalists may resort to it in order to regain power, but surely this is not the kind of armed insurrection the Convention had in mind.

And again. The resolution speaks of armed insurrection and really refers to "putchism". An armed insurrection by

a *minority* against a stable state machinery is a "putch", and "putchism" has been condemned not only by revolutionary socialists but even by communists. It therefore is simply a waste of time to reject what has never been accepted. In any case the added section does not in any way clarify the Declaration of Principles. It only raises anew the problem of the road to power, which it certainly has not settled.

The one real achievement of the convention of which the left wing may be proud is the resolution on war. Outside of this resolution the left wing seems not to have introduced or fought for anything.

This article is not an analysis of the entire convention but merely of the left wing at the convention. I will therefore omit discussion of some very important problems, — platform, Labor Party, to be dealt with in subsequent issues,—but there is one point to be stressed. The Cleveland Convention has shown that a left wing is now even more necessary than before. There is the great and difficult task of re-educating the party membership along the lines of revolutionary Socialism. That cannot and will not be done by the party. The party is inclusive and is, therefore, in the battle of ideas which are natural to an inclusive party, helpless. The task will have to be taken up by the left wing. We missed our opportunity at Cleveland. Let us not repeat our mistakes.

National Constituent Assembly in France

Marcel Fourrier

OUR party comes to power under singular and disquieting circumstances: in the most legal fashion, through the operation of the parliamentary institutions themselves. The *Temps* and other organs of big capitalism, openly encourage "Leon Blum and his friends to crown that great enterprise of the conquest of power which has always been the essential article of the Marxist program, by taking over the government." That is, it seems, "the rules of the game."

So the French Socialist Party is in its turn going to take a flyer at the exercise of legal power. The bourgeoisie reckons, indeed, that faithful to the traditions of the old parties of the Second International, the French Socialist Party is going to run the State for the benefit of capitalism and effect the reforms necessary to calm momentarily the revolutionary upsurge of the masses. The bourgeoisie has no doubt that if the Socialist Party did otherwise, it could not maintain itself in power without breaking with legality. The bourgeoisie is speculating on the "wisdom" and "common sense" of the socialist leaders, as well as on the attractive power of portfolios. But the masses expect something different from our party. The masses want their political victory to manifest itself immediately through economic achievements. The masses made their decision, not so much on the program of the People's Front, as against the present regime of economic disorder. We socialists, however, know that

this economic disorder, this anarchic system of production cannot be ended except by radically transforming the structure of capitalist economy. Will the Socialist Party in power be able to do this?

It must be noted, right off, that the victory of the People's Front is not a specifically socialist victory. The Socialist Party is merely the numerically strongest party of the People's Front. But at any price, it must not confuse itself with the People's Front, *especially before the masses.* Like the other parties of the People's Front, our party has signed the program of the People's Front. Tied down by its signature, it is therefore bound to cooperate loyally in the execution of that program, whose inadequacy as well as pusillanimity we have, moreover, denounced. It is true that the masses are not particularly concerned about programs. First of all they expect from the People's Front bread, peace and liberty which it promised them. It is not for the masses to determine the governmental means "to tear the State out of the grip of industrial and financial feudalism." But *we* know that it means nationalization or socialization of the great monopoly industries, insurance and the banks, that it means transformation of private property into collective property. We have never believed for a single moment that such an overthrow could be brought about without violent resistance, desperate, armed, by the possessing classes who are threatened with expropriation.

So, the bourgeoisie hopes to catch our party in the snare of legality. It knows that, entangled in legality, the future government of the People's Front will be powerless to realize any of the economic changes for which the masses are so impatient. The bourgeoisie banks on this "legal" check to bring about a change of sentiment in the masses.

That is why we must tell the masses, and repeat again and again, that the apparatus of the capitalist state leaves no room for possibility of truly democratic government. Far from turning the masses away from the struggle for complete democracy, we must on the contrary lead them *to* such a struggle, for in the final analysis it is on the outcome of this struggle that the fate of the socialist revolution will depend.

What then is the basis for the development of the struggle for the most democratic form of government?

We left socialists raise the slogan of a Notional Constituent Assembly.

To the working-class and petty-bourgeois masses who turn to us for protection against being robbed of the fruits of their victory, we must make plain that the problem of a People's Front government, and still more of a socialist government, is absolutely insoluble within the framework of the 1875 Constitution. We must make plain to the masses that this 1875 Constitution was historically only a compromise between the monarchical principle and the republican principle, that this constitution does not respect the sovereignty of the people. In fact, if it is the principle of democracy that all political power must emanate from the people, why allow the people to be deprived of the right of being governed by their own representatives, by the operation of obsolete constitutional laws. We must explain to the people that it is necessary to shatter this Constitution and proclaim the "Rights of the Worker and the Citizen."

The bourgeoisie possesses legal means which are powerful and effective enough to annihilate all governmental action contrary to its interests. It has the Senate which it can counterpose to the Chamber of Deputies; it has the President of the Republic who can exercise powers to which he has never yet had to resort; it

has the Courts to sabotage social legislation; it has the administrative bureaucracy; it has money. Every bill which threatens the economic structure of capitalism in the slightest degree will, first of all on the field of legality, run up against the stubborn resistance of the Senate and of the President of the Republic.

Then what is to be done? To temporize would be a confession of impotence. Acceptance of the constitutional "rules of the game" would mean decay in power, disillusion of the masses, and laying the groundwork of fascism.

No, on the contrary, we must go boldly forward. As soon as the first conflict breaks out between the People's Front Chamber and the conservative Senate, it is to the masses that the government will have to appeal in order immediately to secure the calling of a national constituent assembly, charged with determining the most democratic form of the government, with recasting the civil and criminal law and reorganizing justice.

It would be easy to popularize this slogan of a national constituent assembly, which corresponds to the masses' desire for democracy and which they would understand completely. The slogan of a constituent assembly always has a dynamic effect.

Objection might be raised that the national constituent assembly could be called only with the consent of the two Chambers, and that it is improbable that the Senate will consent to go to Versailles; that, moreover, the constituent assembly can act only on points specified in the motion of the two Chambers which voted the constitutional revision. The answer to that is first, that mass pressure *must* force the Senate to yield to the calling of the constituent assembly; next, that once in session, the assembly constitutes a sovereign organ which is no longer bound by the old Constitution. The constituent assembly is mistress of its own acts and even if the Chambers' motion calls for only partial revision, that could not limit its powers.

But it will be said finally, that to revise the Constitution from beginning to end would in the final analysis mean a veritable political revolution. Precisely! It is indeed in this light that we understand it.

(*This article appeared in "la Gauche Revolutionnaire."*
Translated by Harold Draper.)

The ASM will, from time to time, print documents of importance in the international socialist movement.

Resolution on War

Adopted at the Cleveland Convention of the Socialist Party

THE two pillars of capitalist peace in the post war era, namely, the Five Power Naval Treaty and the League of Nations, are today in a state of complete collapse. The imperialist nature of the capitalist peace imposed by the victors upon the vanquished now gives rise to a new imperialist war for a redivision of the earth. Once more, the capitalist nationalist volcano blows off its paper cap of imperialist treaties.

The treaties, the non-aggression pacts, the League of Nations, the sanctions, and the capitalist system of "collective security" have not only failed to give a firm basis for peace but have in themselves become a source of friction and war.

The present international situation proves conclusively that war is inherent in capitalism.

The inherent forces of capitalism leading to war are the struggle of rival imperialisms for new markets, sources of raw material, and fields of exploitation.

In the struggle to maintain or extend the power of rival capitalist states, the world has already been divided into separate camps. The next war, regardless of how it begins, regardless of whether countries are fascist or democratic, small or large, will be one of imperialist interest on both sides.

The Socialist Party warns against mistaking the peace loving pose of any capitalist state for an honest interest in ending the imperialist struggle. Such poses are intended to strengthen the immediate imperialist interest of the capitalist states and to prepare for future imperialist wars as "wars to end war."

In the light of the experiences of the last war, where many working class movements were tricked into support of imperialist war under the guise of a holy crusade, the Socialist Party of the U. S. A. proclaims that no capitalist war can be a good war, that no capitalist device can be a basis for a policy of peace. Only when the workers take political power into their own hands in the great nations of the earth will the world have a sound basis for lasting peace.

WAR AND FASCISM

Because fascism represents a concentrated form of capitalist nationalism, the spread of fascism tends to accelerate the immediate threat of war.

But just as fascism intensifies the danger of war, so the coming of war hastens the coming of fascism. Dictatorial rule, based upon chauvinist demagogy, are normal attendants of all capitalist wars, necessarily exaggerated in the present era of capitalist decay and fascist reaction.

The twin danger of war and fascism must be fought simultaneously as the products of capitalist nationalism. Uncompromising struggle against all capitalist states, both before and after war is declared, is the only method of fighting imperialism and the threat of fascism in our own country and throughout

the world. The Socialist Party, therefore, repudiates support of an imperialist power against a present fascist power as a means of overthrowing fascism.

Sanctions, applied by one or more capitalist nations against another, are merely a new form of imperialist rivalries and cannot be supported by the workers. The support of capitalist sanctions in the Italo-Ethiopian struggle served to paralyze the independent fight of the workers against fascism and imperialism and played into the hands of imperialist rivalries.

The capialist countries are exploiting millions of toilers in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, thus exposing the hypocritical claims of some of these "democratic countries that they are the friends of the small nations that they wish to preserve the independence of the backward nations. The colonial people, in their struggle for freedom, have only the working class to depend upon as allies. The working class in the imperialist countries must in turn render every support to the colonial struggle so as to undermine the foundations of imperialism and facilitate the struggle against it. Refusing to compromise with imperialist schemes about the "re-distribution" of the colonies, the workers must fight vigorously for their complete independence.

The Soviet Union, where capitalism has been abolished, is really desirous of peace. The Soviet Union, surrounded by capitalist enemies, is in constant danger of imperialist attack, and all class conscious workers must be prepared to defend the Soviet Union against imperialist attacks. Such defense, however, can only be a proletarian defense, independent of capitalist governments and their policies and independent of the diplomacy of the Soviet Union, and carried out with the instrumentality of organized labor. Should the American government, or any other capitalist government, for reasons of its own enter into an alliance with the Soviet Union, defense of the Soviet Union does not include support for capitalist allies of the Soviet Union in war. The Soviet Union can best be defended by vigorously carrying on the class war in all countries.

The American government, while talking about peace, has greatly increased its armed forces, has adopted the largest military budget in peace-time history and the largest in the world, is busily engaged in cementing its war alliances (for example—naval treaty with England) and setting up its own sphere of diplomatic and military influence (proposal to organize a Pan-American League of Nations). The American Socialist Party recognizes that its main duty is to the victims of American imperialism at home and abroad, that our main fight is against American imperialism and all its policies, against militarism and against jingoism. As in 1917, American socialists will refuse to support any war the capitalist government of America might undertake. Should war break out despite our efforts, we will continue to carry on the class struggle and the fight against war, and through mass resistance to it, through agitation for a general strike, will endeavor to convert the imperialist war into an organized mass struggle for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a workers' and farmers' government. Should a war break out in any part of the world, regardless of the countries involved, socialists will fight against American participation in that war in any form. Genuine neutrality, however, is impossible for this or any other country so

long as it is ruled by the profit motive. Without creating the illusion that neutrality can be achieved under capitalism, the Socialist Party will fight for the following:

> Liberation of all American colonies and possessions; withrawal of American troops from all foreign territories; no interference in the affairs of other countries, particularly Mexico, Cuba and Central and South America, either by the government or the private individuals; prohibition of the manufacture, transportation or sale of any war materials or munitions; prohibition of loans to other countries for war purposes; withdrawal of government support of guarantees on private loans to other countries for any purpose; cancellation of all war debts and indemnities; abolition of all military training for the youth.

Only a socialist government, however, supported by the broad masses of the workers, will be in a position to carry out such a program and therefore to insure peace. The struggle against war is therefore bound up with the struggle against capitalism and for Socialism. This struggle cannot be conducted unless there is a working class party, clear in policy, consistent and vigorous in action, which never compromises the class struggle, and through all trials leads the working class to the final goal.

ARTICLES TO COME

POLITICAL PORTRAITS — *by McAlister Coleman*

SOCIALISTS AND THE AMERICAN YOUTH CONGRESS — *by Maxwell Horway*

CONSUMERS' COOPERATIVES: A Neglected Socialist Weapon — *by Benjamin Wolf*

LABOR'S PEACE DILEMMA — *by Devere Allen*

THE CONSTITUTION AND THE COURTS — *by Louis B. Boudin*

SOCIALISM AND A LABOR PARTY — *by Herbert Zam*

AN ANALYSIS OF THE PALESTINE SITUATION

FERMENT IN POLITICS — *by David P. Berenberg*

AN ANALYSIS OF THE NEW SOVIET RUSSIAN CONSTITUTION

"Fools Rush In . . . ."

Herbert Zam

THE anti-war resolution adopted at the Cleveland Convention of the Socialist Party is in the best traditions of the international socialist movement. It applies the clear ideas of the St. Louis declaration to the conditions of the present time and charts a straight course through capitalist chaos and war ideologies to a proletarian anti-war struggle and Socialism. Those who are trying to find some "left" reasons for supporting war will not like the resolution. For the resolution tears away both the "left" and the "right" arguments in support of war conducted by capitalists; it shows that the capitalist "peace" schemes were only intended to keep the masses believing that peace was being preserved while in reality war was being prepared. The recent experiences with capitalist sanctions, which which were to have "saved" Ethiopia from Italy should be ample justification for the rejection by the resolution of reliance upon imperialist action to preserve the independence of the small countries or to promote peace. Many workers were taken in by sanctions because they appeared to represent a new policy. *In reality however, they were merely a new form of the old policy.* That has now become clear and must be made clear to the workers. Independent working class activity on behalf of Ethiopia against Italy was paralyzed because of the reliance upon sanctions. This was inevitable. It is childish to talk of having both.

Because the war question is the most important one which confronts the workers of the world, a serious discussion of this issue in the ranks of the working class for the purpose of hammering out a correct policy should be welcomed. It is to be expected that the Cleveland resolution will be subject to a barrage of criticism, both from the right, as well as from the "left", who on this question have very much in common. So far the barrage has not yet begun, but a few pot shots have been fired. The big organizations and periodicals are probably still looking for quotations. But the Lovestone group, engaged in its current task of laying down the line to the Communist Party on how to fight revolutionary Socialism has already entered the lists. "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread".

The attack (Workers Age, June 20, 1936) is a pompous, confused, semi-pacifist, semi-jingoist polemic. It endeavors to hide its complete departure from a revolutionary position by talking about the "complicated" nature of the question, by denouncing "abstract" defense of the Soviet Union, by inveighing against "paying homage to threadbare shibboleths," by calling for "practicality". All this is in the best tradition of the 1914 polemics against Liebknecht, against Lenin. History has already answered the question whether the "practical" socialists of 1914 were more successful than the "abstract" Lenin. We might even remind our critics that not so many months ago they were also defending our position, until Thalheimer changed their minds for them. Nevertheless, let us glance at the "practicality" of our critics.

They want to know whether Comrade Thomas, as "chief executive" would refuse to help the Soviet Union, Egypt, China, Ethiopia, the Philippines. This is a "prac-

tical" question for them! We can assure our comrades that a Socialist United States, with Comrade Thomas as president would not forget its international proletarian solidarity. Just what forms this solidarity would assume will depend on the concrete situation. We certainly can give no guarantee that the American Red Army would be sent into China to help liberate it from Japan. And of course a Socialist United States would work closely with Soviet Russia, whether in the form of mutual assistance pacts, or other forms. But, is this a "practical" discussion? Have we a socialist government here? Is it likely that we will have one by the time the next war is upon us? Is it "practical" to argue over what President Thomas would do when we know full well that we will be operating under President Roosevelt-Landon? There is a world of difference between what we would do in power, and what we expect our capitalist governments to do today. Our critics want us to demand that the capitalist government play the role we would expect a socialist government to play. Our business is to tell the workers that a capitalist government can play only an imperialist role. That is practical. That is the objective of the section on "genuine neutrality."

But let us go a step further. If we are asked to promise that Comrade Thomas will have to do all the above-mentioned things in the name of a Socialist United States, does it not stand to reason that *an existing socialist government should do them today?* And yet who was it who became hysterical at the mere suggestion that the Soviet Union should not sell oil to Italy? If a Socialist United States is expected to give "aid to China in the event of her waging a war of liberation against Japanese imperialist oppression" did Socialist Russia commit a crime by not giving such aid when such a war was being waged in Manchuria and Shanghai? Should the Soviet Union have sent the Red Army into Soviet Hungary to help it against the Rumanian troops and into Socialist Finland to help against the German troops? Our critics can't be on both sides of this question. If they truly believe what they say, they should be the severest critics of the course of the Soviet Union, past and present. Is it not obvious that it is not we, but they, who are just "mouthing phrases?"

Only another phase of the criticism need be taken up in detail. Our critics want to "snatch" power from the capitalists during a war (in which the country is on the side of the Soviet Union, that is, a "good war") *but without opposing the war.* Our reading of history tells us it cannot be done. The bourgeoisie can be overthrown during a war by capitalizing on the opposition which develops in the course of the conduct of the war and the inevitable mass suffering and desperation it brings. But only those who consistently opposed the war from the beginning can so capitalize. This was conclusively demonstrated by the Russian experience. The struggle for peace against the desire of the capitalists to continue the war therefore becomes a revolutionary struggle. Peace can be achieved only by overthrowing capitalism. Around the slogan of peace the entire toiling masses, and the armed forces, rally.

As against this, however, we are told that in this case (a "good" war) peace is not the objective. *"The job of the proletariat taking power is not to stop the war immediately but rather to organize revolutionary warfare".* That is, we will tell the war-weary masses to overthrow capitalism, not to end the war, but to conduct a better war, a more efficient war, a more intensified war, a "revolutionary" war. And the masses will listen to us! This is seriously put forward as a "practical" policy.

It is undeniable that a victorious prole-

tariet may find itself compelled to defend its revolution, to carry on a war in spite of its wishes. But this would not be a matter of choice. A victorious socialist government which refused to move for peace would soon find itself with no support in the country. But peace, even perhaps on unfavorable terms, would give it an opportunity to consolidate the revolutionary gains and build for Socialism. The Brest-Litovsk Treaty and the alternative of "revolutionary war" proposed then, is not exactly analogous, but its lessons should be borne in mind.

For fifteen years the Soviet Union depended upon its own strength and upon the international proletariat for defense. Now suddenly our critics forget the meaning of "proletarian defense". They have so little faith in th Soviet Union that they can only depend upon capitalist governments to protect it. They have so little faith in the working class that they can only depend upon capitalist schemes to preserve peace. If the Soviet Union could, for fifteen years, follow a policy directly opposite to its present one and still preserve itself, it obviously cannot be easily dismissed as "impractical". It cannot be denied that the help a capitalist government can give the Soviet Union can momentarily be more effective than proletarian aid, and no one is opposed to the acceptance of such help. But a policy cannot be based upon capitalist aid. Basic and permanent assistance can come only from the proletariat. No one objects to diplomacy or to treaties in general. But the diplomacy which disorients the proletariat must be treated very critically.

The Cleveland resolution does not deny that wars can be delayed by the militant action of the working class, or by proletarian diplomacy, or even by capitalist diplomacy. But the very essence of pacifism is to harp continually on such possibilities and forget about the inevitability of war under capitalism. The workers had their experience both with pacifism and with various forms of pro-war "Socialism" in 1914. It is this experience, developed in the light of current conditions, which constitutes the kernel of the Cleveland resolution. Not reliance upon capitalist "peace" machinery, not support of "good" wars, not alliances with capitalist governments, but independent, uncompromising, militant proletarian struggle against war, against fascism, against capitalism and for Socialism must be the road of the workers. This is the central orientation of the Cleveland resolution.

READERS' FORUM

The ASM has adopted the policy of opening its pages to communications from its readers with reference to important problems in the socialist movement. It is the desire of the editors that comrades avail themselves of this opportunity. Necessarily, the length of such communications will have to be limited because of space.

Beginning with this issue, resolutions adopted at the Cleveland Convention and articles discussing the resolutions will be carried.

Jurisdictional Disputes and Labor Boards

Joel Seidman

JURISDICTIONAL disputes have long been one of the chief sources of friction within the American labor movement, and much of the time at American Federation of Labor conventions has been devoted to them. Craft unions shade into each other, as do industrial unions; and industrial lines, of course, cut across craft distinctions. The situation is bad enough when such disputes must be decided within the labor family. It is infinitely worse, however, when they are presented to a governmental agency for decision.

Some such cases have already been presented to the National Labor Relations Board. These cases have typically arisen when an individual union asks to have an election conducted in an entire plant to choose representatives for collective bargaining, only to have one or more craft unions ask to have specified craftsmen designated a separate unit for bargaining purposes. By its decision as to the size of the unit, in such cases, the board determines whether craft or industrial unionism shall win in the election. Thus far the board has wisely refused to hold an election at all, on the ground that such disputes should be decided within the American Federation of Labor itself.

Nevertheless real danger exists that governmental agencies will some day assume jurisdiction in such cases, and the cleavage between the craft unions and the industrial unions makes it certain that these cases will arise in much greater number in the future. It is quite possible that the present rift between the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. and the Committee for Industrial Organization may lead to a split in the Federation, and the formation of a rival trade union center by the industrial union group. If that occurs there will be no machinery for settling such disputes within the labor movement. The bitterness that will then exist will make it certain that each group will regularly challenge the jurisdiction of the other in labor board cases.

Future board members, moreover, may be less friendly to labor and less judicious in their attitude than are the present ones. The loose language of the old Section 7a of N.I.R.A. and of the present National Labor Relations Act would permit a board, not only to assume jurisdiction in such matters, but also to exercise other types of control over internal union functions.[1] At present, of course, the entire issue is

[1] This was hinted at by the old National Labor Relations Board in the celebrated Houde case, when it wrote into its decision these significant words:

"Nor does this opinion lay down any rule as to what the employer's duty is where the majority group imposes rules of participation in its membership and government which exclude certain employees whom it purports to represent in collective bargaining, or where, in an election, representatives have been chosen by a mere plurality of the votes cast, or by a majority of the votes cast but less than a majority of all employees entitled to vote; or where the majority group has taken no steps toward collective bargaining or has so abused its privileges that some minority group might justly ask this Board for appropriate relief." Decisions of the National Labor Relations Board, Volume I, p. 44. The National Urban League, before the adoption of the National Labor Relations Act, urged an amendment making it an unfair practice for a labor organization "to bar from membership any worker or group of workers for reason of race or creed either by constitutional provision or by ritualistic practice."

academic, for the United States Supreme Court will almost certainly hold the Labor Relations Act unconstitutional [2] or narrowly restrict it to workers who actually transport goods from state to state. Nevertheless, labor must be interested in such cases, for future boards will be set up under future acts, and the decisions of the current board may exercise an important influence then.

The jurisdictional issue was squarely raised in several cases decided in the spring of 1936. The leading case [3] arose out of the aluminum industry. There a federal local, No. 19104, claimed to represent 1,681 of the 2,600 employes of the Aluminum Company of America in its Alcoa, Tennessee, plants. The various federal locals in the industry had been combined into a national council, to bring about joint action until an international union was chartered by the A. F. of L. In February, 1935, William Green reorganized the council, and appointed a general organizer of the A. F. of L. as its president. The council sought to have all the aluminum workers authorize it to represent them in bargaining, but the Alcoa workers instead designated their local as their bargaining agent.

In July the Alcoa local asked Williams to call a conference of unions in Aluminum Company of America plants to prepare a new agreement. Upon his refusal it withdrew from the council. Later negotiations were begun with the Alcoa local present, but it soon became dissatisfied and withdrew. The company continued the negotiations, after being assured through President Green of the A. F. of L. that the agreement reached would be binding upon all its plants, including the Alcoa one. The agreement that was reached on October 14, 1935, was to run for at least one year. It purported to cover all the employees of the company, and provided that during its life the company should not enter into any conflicting agreement. One month later President Green gave the agreement the official approval of the A. F. of L. In the meantime the Alcoa local submitted a proposed agreement to the company, but the company refused to bargain with it. The Alcoa local then asked the board to declare the Alcoa plant a unit for collective bargaining, and to conduct an election between it and the council.

The board, in its decision, observed that the underlying question was not whether the union should represent the workers, but rather who should represent the union in its dealings with the employer. The board wisely decided that such a problem, involving the internal affairs of the A. F. of L., was best left to that body for solution. It accordingly dismissed the petition for an election.

The most bitter cases are those that involve jurisdictional disputes between rival unions. Two such cases that have been presented to the National Labor Relations Board arose in the tobacco industry. [4] The Axton-Fisher Tobacco Company employed 706 workers in its Louisville, Kentucky, plant, where it man-

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2 In its decision, handed down May 18, 1936, holding the Guffey Coal Act unconstitutional, the Supreme Court observed that "Conditions in the mining industry are grievious and even desperate. But all the evils are local evils. The relation of the employer and the employe is a local relation." These words almost certainly seal the doom of the National Labor Relations Act. A number of test cases are already on their way up to the Supreme Court. In the meantime, very few employers pay any attention to pronouncements of the board.

3 In the matter of Aluminum Company of America and Aluminum Workers Union No. 19104. Case No. R-4, decided April 10, 1936.

4 In the matter of The Axton-Fisher Tobacco Company and International Association of Machinists, Local No. 681, and Tobacco Workers' International Union, Local No. 16; In the matter of Brown and Williamson Tobacco Corporation and International Association of Machinists, Local No. 681, and Tobacco Workers' International Union, Local No. 16. Cases Nos. R-5 and R-6, decided April 23, 1936 (both cases in one decision).

ufactured cigarettes and other tobacco products. Of these about nine-tenths, or 650 in number, were members of the Tobacco Workers' Union, the remainder belonging to the Machinists and other craft unions. Since 1899 the plant has operated on a closed shop basis. Until 1932 all workers belonged to the Tobacco Workers. In 1932 and 1933, however, that union recognized the jurisdictional claims of the various craft unions, and the ten per cent of craftsmen in the plant joined their respective craft organizations. The company entered into verbal agreements with the various crafts, but its only written agreement continued to be with the Tobacco Workers.

The dispute centered about the machine fixers, who were claimed both by the Machinists and by the Tobacco Workers, with the company supporting the claim of the latter. A second issue was also involved as to whether the machinists constituted a separate unit for bargaining purposes. This, however, was secondary, for the Tobacco Workers did not dispute jurisdiction over the machinists proper. Though the company desired the entire plant to be the unit for bargaining, it would doubtless have entered into a written agreement with the Machinists had the dispute over the machine fixers been settled with the Tobacco Workers. The Tobacco Workers claimed that the tobacco workers and machine fixers together constituted a proper collective bargaining unit, and that the machinists alone constituted another.

The Brown and Williamson case was essentially similar. Its plant, also in Louisville, employed 2,684 workers, of whom 2,451 belonged to the Tobacco Workers, and the remainder to various craft unions. This plant was organized by the Tobacco Workers in 1933, at which time, not claiming jurisdiction over the craftsmen, it encouraged them to enroll in the various craft unions. By the terms of its contract with the Tobacco Workers, the company does not employ workers not members of the Tobacco Workers, unless they belong to some other union affiliated with the A. F. of L. The local of the Tobacco Workers in the plant conceded the machine fixers to the Machinists, but the Tobacco Workers' International Union, the parent body, asserted the claim for its local at the hearing.

In its decision the board observed that this was but a typical jurisdictional quarrel between two A. F. of L. unions, though it was phrased in terms of the unit for collective bargaining. The National Labor Relations Act, the board said, merely provided a new vocabulary in which jurisdictional disputes might be described. The two unions belonged to the A. F. of L., which had the authority to render a binding decision on the dispute. The board therefore declined to intervene, and refused to certify any representatives in the two cases or to determine the appropriate bargaining unit.

An oil case,[5] decided the same day as the tobacco case, involved a company union as well as an industrial and several craft unions. The Oil Field, Gas Well and Refinery Workers of America petitioned for an election at the Standard Oil Company's El Segundo, California, refinery to choose representatives for collective bargaining. It asserted that its claim to represent the workers was contested by the Standard Employees Association, a company union. Had no complication arisen, the election would undoubtedly have been ordered. But five

[5] In the matter of Standard Oil Company of California and International Association of Oil Field, Gas Well and Refinery Workers of America, Case No. XXI-R-3, decided April 23, 1936.

unions,[6] all affiliated with the A. F. of L., protested against holding the election, on the ground that they had jurisdiction over the craftsmen employed by the company. The Oil Field Workers, conceding the claim of the Boiler Makers, amended its petition to exclude boiler workers, welders, and helpers from the bargaining unit. The four remaining crafts then proposed a joint council, consisting of themselves and the Oil Field Workers, to oppose the company union. The Oil Field Workers rejected this on the ground that the four crafts actually had no members employed at the refinery. The board, holding this a jurisdictional dispute to be decided by the A. F. of L., refused to intervene, and dismissed the petition for the election.[7]

Several other cases have arisen in which craft unions have objected to an entire plant being made the unit for collective bargaining, as requested by an industrial union. When the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers asked for an election in the Portsmouth, Ohio, plant of the Wheeling Steel Corporation, the International Association of Machinists asked the board to exclude machine repair and maintenance men from the election. The glass industry is witnessing similar jurisdictional disputes. The opposing unions there are the Glass Bottle Blowers' Association, an old-line craft union, and the Federation of Flat Glass Workers, a younger and more vigorous group allied with the Committee for Industrial Organization. Several of the metal craft unions, it has been reported, want to have the National Labor Relations Act amended to safeguard their right to the jurisdiction awarded to them by the A. F. of L.

One case that raised somewhat different, though related, issues, deserves mention also, because it illustrates the chaos that will result if the A. F. of L. should split.[8] The Mechanics Educational Society of America, which is not affiliated with the A. F. of L., signed an agreement with the Sands Manufacturing Company of Cleveland, Ohio, in May, 1934, and again in June, 1935. Increased work led to the hiring of some new men, not members of the M.E.S.A. In August the company proposed increasing the force in the machine shop, using the new men, while shutting down the other departments. The M.E.S.A. committee, given a temporary shutdown of the entire plant as the alternative, chose the latter course. A notice was posted that the plant would close August 31, until further notice.

On August 26 or 27, officials of the company went to the local office of the International Association of Machinists, and negotiated an agreement which became effective on September 3. On that day the plant opened, after calling back all of those workers, almost all of them new men, who were members of the Machinists. The Machinists also helped to supply additional workers. Only four of the older workers, members of the M.E.S.A., were called back. Two of them testified that an officer of the company told them they could work only if they joined the Machinists. None of the

6 These were the International Association of Machinists, the International Union of Operating Engineers, the International Brotherhood of Firemen and Oilers, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and the International Brotherhood of Boiler Makers, Iron Ship Builders and Helpers. They were combined in the Oil Industry Metal Trades Council of Southern California.

7 Similar questions were presented in two other cases by the Oil Field, Gas Well and Refinery Workers, relating to the Baytown, Texas, plant of the Humble Oil Company and the Beaumont, Texas, plant of the Magnolia Petroleum Company. After the Oil Field Workers had filed their petition for elections in these cases, a number of craft unions in the metal trades protested on jurisdictional grounds.

8 In the matter of The Sands Manufacturing Company and Mechanics Educational Society of America. Case No. C-33, decided April 17, 1936.

four went back to work, and other former employes who applied were told that their places had been taken. The M.E.S.A. then began to picket the plant. On or about September 10, at the company's request, the contract with the Machinists was cancelled by mutual consent. The board had no difficulty in holding the M.E.S.A. to be the exclusive bargaining representative of the workers, and it also ordered the discharged men reinstated.

These cases are but the beginning. The increasing bitterness between the industrial unions of the Committee for Industrial Organization and the conservative craft unions will cause similar cases to arise much more frequently. Steel, automobiles, oil, rubber, and other mass production industries will be the battlegrounds. If the A. F. of L. does not split, the worst that will happen will be that the rival union forces will checkmate each other, and temporarily give victory to the employer and his company union. If a split occurs organized scabbery may be the order of the day, with employers enlisting the aid of one union group to break the strikes of the other. Cases such as the Sands Manufacturing Company will multiply.

In the event of a split, the dangers of governmental intervention will be increased many-fold. The bad feeling that will be engendered in the fight between the dual labor bodies will probably lead each to challenge the jurisdiction of the other in cases before labor boards. No labor tribunal will then exist with authority recognized by both groups, and with power to settle the dispute within the union family.

Under such circumstances it is quite possible that labor boards may intervene, particularly if there is a change in board membership. If the boards do intervene, their decisions as to the proper unit for collective bargaining, as has been shown, will determine whether the craft or the industrial union will win the election. A governmental agency, the members of which are nominated by the president, will then be settling in substantial measure the most vital issue confronting the labor unions.

Such a development would be fraught with the greatest dangers to labor. The government would then exercise an important influence over the very structure of the labor movement. To have a governmental agency settle the most vital union issue would give it a degree of control over internal union affairs that smacks dangerously of fascist economics. If the unions ever thus become subject to governmental supervision, the internal affairs of the unions might be regulated in other ways, and one of our greatest bulwarks against fascism in America will have been greatly weakened.

The alternative is for labor to put its own house in order, and do it quickly. Some way must be found to settle these controversies peacefully within labor's ranks, to remove these internal union issues from the jurisdiction of labor boards, and to end the danger of governmental intervention.

The ASM assumes no responsibility for signed articles. Such articles express the opinion of the writers. The ASM strives to serve as a free forum for all shades of opinion within our movement.

Digest of the Draft Program for the Spanish Socialist Party

THE illusion that the socialist revolution can be realized by transforming the present system of society must be eliminated. There is no other recourse than to destroy it root and branch. The illusions of reformism, the hope that capitalist society could be transformed into a Socialist Society by means of gradual reforms, found its explanation in the expanding, and especially in the imperialist phase of capitalism, when the workers were able to wrest increasing economic advantages and more favorable conditions of life, from the dominant classes.

Today this illusion is completely chimerical. Capitalism is now on a descending curve. It has passed from the expanding to the restrictive or defensive stage. This is partly because of the progressive industrialization of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, which has reduced their imports of manufactured goods, and partly because of technological progress, which has replaced men by machines, thus increasing unemployment in gigantic proportions, and has created over-production at the same time as purchasing power throughout the world has been reduced.

There are only two ways out of this crisis: one is fascism and the other is Socialism. Fascism is in essence the suppression of bourgeois democracy so as to despoil the working class more conveniently. It is a dictatorship of capitalism to cover its losses and avoid the final collapse at the exclusive cost of the enslavement of the workers. And it inevitably leads to war so as to avoid or postpone the social revolution at home by encouraging the hope of a victory abroad.

The other way out of the crisis is revolutionary Socialism. Bourgeois democracy has fulfilled its historical mission in some countries, and elsewhere it will be difficult for it alone to confront the capitalist forces which wish to replace it by a totalitarian Fascist State. The only class which can prevent fascism is the proletariat, not by merely defending bourgeois democracy but by the conquest of political power by all available means, so as to achieve the socialist revolution and complete democracy—a classless democracy.

During the period of transition the form of government will be the dictatorship of the proletariat. Dictatorship does not necessarily mean arbitrariness and lawless violence. Bourgeois democracy is a legal dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the other classes. Working class democracy would be a legal dictatorship of the proletariat over the others. It would thus be the most extensive and perfect democracy in history. Insensibly the dictatorship of the proletariat, or working-class democracy would convert itself into a complete or classless democracy. The organ of this dictatorship would be the Socialist Party.

Then follows an examination of the possibility of such a dictatorship, and

of the transition to socialism, in Spain, leading to the conclusion that from all points of view the backwardness of capitalism in Spain makes it more imperative than in other countries for the proletariat to conquer political power and establish its democratic dictatorship.

To this end, says the draft, it is necessary to unite immediately all revolutionary actions by the political and industrial fusion of all workers' organizations, and by the complete rupture of the Socialist Party with every reformist of centrist tendency.

Among the immediate aspirations of the party would be:—

1. The conquest of political power by the working class, and by any possible means.

2. The transformation of the individual or corporate ownership of the instruments of labor (land, mines, transport, factories, machines, money, capital, banks and great capitalist syndicates, trusts, cartels, etc.) into collective, social or common ownership.

During the period of transition the form of government would be the dictatorship of the proletariat, organized as a workers' democracy.

3. The organization of society on the basis of economic federations, and the use of the instruments of labor by collective oganizations of the workers, which would guarantee to all members the satisfaction of their needs in relation to the means at the disposal of society.

The draft closes with a summary of the political, economic, financial and municipal measures regarded as necessary for the realization of the party's aspirations.

The measures which the Spanish working-class desire to see fulfilled in the present situation were set out in the May Day appeal.

The program of the People's Front, which we shall support and stimulate, is being carried out, and although it does not satisfy our class apirations we call for its rapid fulfilment and the taking of the following measures:—

Energetic punishment of those who took part in the repression of the revolutionary movement of October, 1934, in Asturias. Moral and economic reparation for the victims.

More humanitarian régime in the prisons.

Revision of police registers.

Republicanization of the magistrature, the army and the civil service.

Revision of the law on public order and the law of vagabonds.

Repression of usury.

Reduction of exhorbitant rents.

Extension of agricultural credits.

Repeal of the farm law. Promulgation of a new law and revision of the evictions.

Development of collective agriculture.

Immediate repurchase of communal property.

Property of the nobility to be taken over.

Maximum working week of 40 hours.

Establishment of workers' control in industry.

State aid to trade unions to meet the urgent needs of the unemployed.

Construction of urban and rural housing.

Punishment of the offence of "wage-cutting" and introduction of minimum wages.

Restoration and revision of the social

legislation of the Cortes Constituyentes.

Nationalization of the banks and primary indutries.

Submission of the banks to the necessities of the country.

Uninterrupted creation of primary schools.

Access for young workers to universities.

Professional education and financial assistance to young people receiving such education.

Re-establishment of diplomatic and commercial relations with the U.S.S.R.

BOOKS RECEIVED

A NOTE ON LITERARY CRITICISM, by James T. Farrell.
The Vanguard Press., N. Y. $2.50.

CITY GOVERNMENT, by Daniel W. Hoan.
Harcourt, Brace & Company, N. Y. $2.50.

RULERS OF AMERICA, by Anna Rochester.
International Publishers, N. Y. $2.50.

UNDER THE AXE OF FASCISM, by Gaetano Salvemini.
Viking Press, N. Y. $3.00.

ALIEN AMERICANS, by B. Schrieke.
Viking Press, N. Y. $2.50.

THIS SOVIET WORLD, by Anna Louise Strong.
Henry Holt & Company, N. Y. $2.00.

INTRODUCTION TO DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM, by August Thalheimer.
Covici Friede, N. Y. $2.00.

LABOR IN MODERN INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY, by Norman J. Ware.
D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, Mass. $3.48.

LENIN, by W. C. White.
Random House, N. Y. $1.50.

TRAVELS IN TWO DEMOCRACIES, by Edmund Wilson.
Harcourt Brace & Company, N. Y. $2.50.

ZWISCHEN ZWEI WELTKRIEGEN? by Otto Bauer.
Eugen Prager-Verlag, Czech. Kc 32 - sfr. 4.50.

Book Reviews

A PROGRAM FOR MODERN AMERICA

by Harry W. Laidler

Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York City, 1936. 517 pp. $2.50.

Harry Laidler's latest book appears at an opportune time. As it becomes increasingly evident that the New Deal has failed in its supposed objective of restoring employment and establishing decent living conditions for the masses, a new program which will help to do this is called for. If for no other reason, a definite forward looking program is necessary at this time to counteract the forces of reaction ready to capitalize on the failure of the New Deal. Any one acquainted with the realities of American psychology knows only too well that the nation is unlikely in the near future to swing wholeheartedly either to socialism or communism. It is consequently even more urgent that a program for reform for which there is some slight possibility of acceptance be offered at this time,—a program upon which liberals and radicals might join in a united front.

Briefly, Dr. Laidler's program includes a Child Labor Amendment to insure a "square deal for American childhood"; the Workers' Rights or Hillquit Amendment to make possible adequate insurance schemes for protection against unemployment, illness and old age; a shorter work week; collective bargaining between employers and employees, the establishment of an adequate long-range public works program, an extensive public housing plan; "a common sense agricultural program" which would "strive to aid the farmer as consumer, producer, merchant, debtor and citizen"; the conservation of public resources under public ownership; a revamping of the system of taxation based upon capacity to pay; social ownership and democratic administration of railroads, public utilities and banking; the preservation and extension of civil liberties, a constitution adjusted to the needs of the time; an international polity to insure peace and new political alignment.

To each item of this program the author devotes a chapter in which he develops the background of the problem, earlier efforts at reform, the existing condition which makes further reform necessary, various proposals which have been made with an appraisal of them. Those acquainted with Dr. Laidler's earlier books, particularly *Boycotts and the Labor Struggle* (1914), *A History of Socialist Thought* (1927) and *Concentration of Control in American Industry* (1931) know the sanity and scholarship which characterize his work. This volume is in the best Laidler tradition,—clear, interesting, sound and opportune. It contains not only a "program for modern America" but a mine of information concerning American economic and social conditions.

Dr. Laidler's volume serves a very useful purpose in debunking a prevalent idea that the New Deal is socialism. A comparison of Laidler's program with the New Deal legislation shows how faltering and tentative the latter is. When one realizes how far the program of this

book falls short of complete socialism and then how far to the right the New Deal legislation is from the Laidler program, the absurdity of the contention is only too obvious. The program suggested by Dr. Laidler is in no way intended as a substitution for socialism. It is presented simply to "furnish a minimum program of social change", a reform program which in a capitalist society "would uproot many of the worst evils of our national life." Its attainment, says the author, must be followed by a mobilization of the political strength of the masses "for an intelligent, orderly and courageous attack on the citadel of power—on the profit system—and must build in its place a scientifically planned society under which industry is carried on for use not for profit." To those who will agree that a decent civilization may be achieved through gradual reform, Dr. Laidler has offered an intelligent working program. To the pessimist who believes this impossible, the book at least provides an arsenal of information on contemporary America. To the student of liberal thought and reform movements the volume furnishes an accurate picture of present day liberalism in this country.

HAROLD U. FAULKNER.

THE LIFE OF FRIEDRICH ENGELS
by Gustav Mayer. Alfred A. Knopf, N. Y. $3.50

Most of us when we write of Marx and Engels quite unconsciously accent the first of these names and pass lightly over the second. This is inevitable in view of the greater original genius of Karl Marx, and in the light of his preponderant energy and the greater volume of his writings. That it is also the consequence of the modesty of Friedrich Engels, who did not hesitate to be the minor partner in the firm, has from time to time been suspected. Much of the data offered by Gustav Mayer in his biography of Engels, gives substance to the suspicion.

If Mayer has correctly evaluated Engels, he was a great deal more than a minor partner. He thought his way through the Hegelian philosophy to socialism before Marx did. He was in touch with the German and French communists sooner than Marx. The basis of the famous friendship between the two men lay in the fact that they had independently reached similar conclusions by similar process of thought.

There has been much discussion of the question of the contributions of the two men to their joint work the *Communist Manifesto*. "In later life," Mayer tells us, "Engels used to say that both Marx and he had produced drafts independently, and that the definitive version had been made after that." In a sense Mayer rejects Engels own version of the origin of the *Manifesto*. The final draft, he thinks, judging from its style, is that of Marx. "But although it was chiefly Marx who coined the gold," he says, "Engels had not been behind him in collecting the ore. There is in the *Communist Manifesto* scarcely one thought that cannot be found in the manuscript (then unpublished) of *German Ideology*. If that work had found a publisher, it would have anticipated the *Manifesto* in all its accounts of the history and tendencies of economic life, the origins and future task of the modern proletariat, the functions of the class-war, the shrinkage in the functions of the state and the inevitability of the communist revolution."

Engels gave eighteen years of his life to the conducting of a textile factory at Manchester. He loathed it, although the experience gave him an insight into the

working of the capitalist system that he could hardly have achieved otherwise. Yet he continued with it for years after he could have retired wholly so that he might continue his financial aid to Marx. He recognized the importance of the work upon which Marx was engaged, and he knew that that work might be crippled, or even altogether abandoned, if Marx were compelled to give his time to remunerative work. He helped Marx with money. He wrote many of the articles that appeared under the signature of Marx in the New York Tribune. He apparently never felt that he was playing second fiddle to a greater man.

Bourgeois commentators on Marx and Engels have pointed out that in nearly every case their immediate prognostications proved unsound. It is true that in 1848 and often thereafter, they expected the proletariat to seize power. They underestimated, as Mayer points out, the vitality of the bourgeoisie. In 1857 Engels thought that capitalism had no way out of the world-wide depression then prevailing, and that the collapse of capitalism was at hand. He was wrong. Capitalism had barely begun its imperialist phase. Yet those who take comfort in this, and in similar errors; those who find in these miscalculations proof of the fallaciousness of the Marxian method, are equally wrong. The crisis in capitalism that Marx and Engels predicted has come, later than Engels thought, but inevitably. In this connection it is interesting to note that Engels saw in Bonapartism a "state (in which) every vestige of political power is withdrawn from both workers and capitalists alike, the freedom of the press and the right of combination is forbidden and universal suffrage is cramped in a way that makes it almost impossible to elect opposition candidates." Engels thought Bonapartism a form of reversion to feudal forms; a victory for the old aristocracy. He did not foresee that it might equally be the resort of a surfeited and decadent capitalism in the last stages of its struggles against the proletariat. What he described is fascism.

Engels feared the Lassallean influences in the ranks of the German workers. The last decades of his life were devoted to the struggle against them and against all tendencies that might divert the proletariat from its course. This struggle produced his most important work, "Anti-Dühring". Dühring, a university professor who became important in the German labor movement through the instrumentality of Eduard Bernstein, had denied that "the economic process is governed by immutable laws." He thought it "should leave great scope for individual action." He ridiculed Marx, and attacked the Hegelian method and the materialistic conception of history in particular. He was proving attractive to men like Johann Most (later an anarchist leader in Europe and America) and even to Bebel. Only Wilhelm Liebknecht stood out against him, and asked Engels to write a polemic against Dühring. Engels reluctantly did so. "He did not suspect," says Mayer, "that he was about to strike the decisive blow for the conversion of continental social democracy to Marxism." "Anti-Dühring" taught the movement the importance of the materialistic conception of history (which Mayer incorrectly calls the "economic conception"). Effective as it was, it did not quite succeed in scotching the positivist ideas or the Lassallean ideology that later led to the decadence and collapse of German Social Democracy.

Mayer's book, devoted as it is, to Engels' work, leaves us with an inadequate picture of the man. We catch glimpses

of a vital, energetic person who (unlike Marx) did not hesitate to enjoy life. He was no ascetic. Like Marx he was arrogant and merciless to all who opposed him. We know his generosity to Marx and his readiness to sacrifice himself for the good of his cause. He had his vanities, among which we may count an unwarranted belief in his ability as a military tactician. These and other facets of his person we catch here and there in Mayer's pages. Yet there is room for another book in which the deeper sources of Engels' many-sided personality can be tapped.

DAVID P. BERENBERG.

LABOR FACT BOOK III

Prepared by Labor Research Association. International Publishers, N. Y., 216 pages. $1.00.

In form and in contents the Labor Fact Book resembles the defunct American Labor Year Books, published from 1916 to 1932 by the Rand School of Social Science. The present book contains a large amount of material, none of which is particularly new or startling, but which is very convenient for the journalist, the research worker, and the political worker when brought together in a small compass. It contains a not quite adequate analysis of the New Deal, a discussion of workers' conditions, a history of recent strikes, a discussion of trends in the labor movement, of farmers and farm workers, the united front, civil rights and fascist trends, war and war preparations, and Soviet States.

The book is to a certain extent vitiated by a too obvious communist emphasis. So, for example, the struggle between the right and left elements for control of the Socialist Party is treated merely as a facet in the "struggle" for the United Front. Again in the chapter on *Soviet States,* a purely communist and entirely misleading version of the situation in China is offered. In the chapter on *War and War Preparations* the Third Congress of the League Against War and Fascism is discussed. We are told that "To it went 2,070 delegates from 1,840 organizations, representing 3,291,906 members in 30 states. There were 209 delegates from 181 A. F. of L. local and international unions and central bodies. From 65 independent unions came 83 delegates." This is a typically communist use of statistics. No mention is made here of the many overlapping organizations under C. P. control that sent delegates; of the I.W.O., and I.L.D. units, and of the local Leagues Against War and Fascism that represented nothing but the C. P. No mention is here made of the 30,000 locals in the A. F. of L., in comparison with which 181 is a ludicrously small figure. And when we are told of the 604,511 unionists represented at the Congress, we are not also told how the figure is arrived at, and how many of the 604,511 knew that they were being represented.

There are some interesting omissions in the book. There is no mention of the sale of oil by Soviet Russia to Italy, although other items in the war against Ethiopia are listed. There is virtually no discussion of fascism in Italy or in Germany. There is no mention of the boycott of German goods, one of the more important items in the struggle of the A. F. of L. against fascism.

The sins of commission and omission noted above are intended merely to underline the fact that this an official communist publication, and must therefore be checked and re-checked before it can be used. With such precautions and in the absence of a book prepared by a more reliable agency, it has its uses.

DAVID P. BERENBERG.